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Elements of positivism in the Ukrainian philosophy and culture of the second half of the 19th century*

Abstract

This article addresses the appropriation of positivist thought by Ukrainian intellectuals in the second half of the nineteenth century, in particular in the field of philosophy of history. By discussing elements of positivist thought in the works of Mykhailo Drahomanov, Ivan Franko and Pantaleimon Kulish, the author argues that all three were under direct influence of positivist thought, but none of them was a blind adherent of positivism. Positivism particularly influenced their thinking about history and the issue of determinism. Importantly, it was not the French positivism of Auguste Comte whose ideas were adopted,

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but rather the English positivism of Henry Thomas Buckle and John Stuart Mill.

Key words: *History, Mykhailo Drabomanov, Ivan Franko, Philosophy, Positivism, Progress Pantelejmon Kulish, Ukraine*

Elementy pozytywizmu w ukraińskiej filozofii i kulturze drugiej połowy XIX wieku

Abstrakt

Artykuł omawia recepcję myśli pozytywistycznej przez ukraińskich intelektualistów w drugiej połowie XIX wieku, szczególnie w dziedzinie filozofii historii. Na podstawie analizy elementów pozytywistycznej myśli w dziełach Mykhailo Drabomanova, Iwana Franki oraz Panteleimona Kulisha, artykuł dowodzi, że wszyscy autorzy byli pod bezpośrednim wpływem myśli pozytywistycznej, ale żaden z nich nie był ślepym zwolennikiem pozytywizmu. Pozytywizm wpłynął zwłaszcza na ich myślenie o historii i kwestię determinizmu. Co ciekawe, nie był to pozytywizm francuski Auguste'a Comte'a, którego idee zostały przyjęte, ale raczej angielski pozytywizm Henry'ego Thomasa Buckle'a i Johna Stuarta Milla.

Słowa kluczowe: *filozofia, historia, Mykhailo Drabomanov, Ivan Franko, pozytywizm, postęp, Panteleimon Kulish, Ukraina*

1. Introduction¹

Positivism appeared out of the intellectual atmosphere that reflected the reality of industrial civilization with all its pros and cons. Intellectuals in the national communities that were on the verge of modernization in different spheres of social life (economy, education), favoured a transfer of elements of positivist culture from the lands where early positivism arose as a reaction to and an expression of modernization.

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It was especially the transformative potential of positivism that appealed to the enlightened public – liberal intellectuals saw the dissemination of the “positivist” programme among the masses as one of the ways to transform the society. As a general attitude of western industrial society, positivism – in contrast to the feudal tendencies to underscore godly, sacral values – put the worldly values in the foreground: physical nature of men, their practical interest and productive activities in the material world.

The elements of positivist doctrine began to enter Ukrainian intellectual sphere beginning with the 1860s, when the Ukrainian people lived across the Romanov and the Habsburg empires. The imperial cultural contexts played an immense role here, as both Russian and Habsburg scholars transmitted positivist ideas into the Ukrainian cultural sphere. In the second half of the 19th century, Ukrainian people witnessed processes of modern nation-building, which also left its mark on the aspects of positivism’s appropriation in the part of Ukrainian community we can call “Ukrainian national” community.

Given the political problematics of imperial states with their multicultural societies, the question arises as to whom we can see as “Ukrainian” and what the denotation “Ukrainian philosophy” should mean. If we want to ascribe the acts of individual creativity, in our case the reception of positivist ideas, to the collective phenomena defined as “nation” or “nationality”, the criterion can be the national identification of the author of a given work. This identification legitimizes concepts such as “Ukrainian positivism” or “positivism in Ukrainian culture”. One has to add, however, that not all representatives of positivism in Ukraine at the time defined themselves through Ukrainian national identity. Characteristic for this period is the phenomenon of double-identity as little-Russian (Ukrainian) identity, matching West-Russian imperial identity, with primacy of the latter: “gente Ukrainus, natione Russus” as Ivan Franko once characterized this syncretism of identity. As a prominent example of this phenomenon one can name one of the most active promoters of positivism in the Russian Empire, Poltava-region born little-Russian Volodymyr Lesevych (1838–1905).²

² On the characteristics of Lesevych’s positivist conception of history see Lesevych 1869, cf. also Gusev 1995.

The phenomenon of Ukrainian positivism has been noted by historians already since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1915 Myhailo Hordiyevs'kyi (1885–1938) published an article on Lesevych as scientific philosopher of history detailing his use of Comte's law of three stages.³ In the works written during the Soviet period, positivism was often subsumed under the idealist philosophy, although clearly positivism stood outside of the Marxist dualism of materialism vs. idealism. Overviews of the philosophical thought have included also the three authors analysed in this article, sketching their thought in a cursory way.⁴ In the post-Soviet times a number of scholars have noted positivist influences in the oeuvre of my protagonists, most importantly Ihor Zahara writing on Franko's positivism, Jevhen Pahlik in his work on worldview and historiosophy of Kulish, and Larysa Depenchuk and Mykola Luk in their book on Drahomanov's social philosophy.⁵ I myself have detailed positivist influence on Ukrainian thought on manifold occasions.⁶ Most recently Elena Bohdashyna's book discussed the impact of positivism on the Ukrainian historiography.⁷ Bohdashyna concludes that Ukrainian historical writing was under a deep influence of the positivist methodology, especially coming from the German historiography (Ranke and others), although, as she shows, these ideas were adopted to meet specificities of the young emergent Ukrainian community.

In this article I will focus on the elements of the positivist paradigm in one specific part of the Ukrainian philosophical culture, namely philosophy of history. I will analyse the views of three Ukrainian intellectuals in the second half of the 19th century, who either clearly defined themselves through Ukrainian identity, or whom the later historiographic tradition labelled as such (and in these cases there were good reasons for it). As I shall argue, there are essential connections between their thought and positivist approaches, although neither of them was a blind follower of just one of the positivist currents.⁸ Three protagonists with

³ [Hordiyevs'kyi] Zhurlyvyi 1915.

⁴ Cf. Shynkaruk 1987; Ostryanyn 1966.

⁵ Depenchuk, Luk 1999; Zahara 1998; Pahlik 2007, pp. 308–355.

⁶ Artyuh 2008; 2010; 2011; 2012a; 2012b.

⁷ Bohdashyna 2010.

⁸ For the recent reevaluation of differing positivisms see Feichtinger/Fillafer/Surman (forthcoming).

whom we will be concerned were also prominent in the formation of the early Ukrainian identity projects, namely Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895), Pantlejmon Kulish (1819–1897) and Ivan Franko (1856–1916). As prominent authors of their time, they represent the vanguard of Ukrainian intellectuals. Their use of positivist thought shows also their strategies of mediating the early Ukrainian identity with regard to Ukrainian past. The question if their reception of positivism triggered responses among other Ukrainian scholars and thinkers or had an impact on intellectual policies of Ukrainian parties, and if they could be considered mediators of French and English would be a next logical step in this interesting path, it cannot however be covered in this text.

2. Mykhailo Drahomanov: history and progress

Theoretical interest in history, both in history as a process and as a science⁹ of this process, is characteristic of a number of Ukrainian thinkers in the modern period. This curiosity was connected to the efforts to understand and define the unique Ukrainian path in history. Generalizing ideas about a distinct Ukrainian history became an important element of self-awareness of Ukrainian nation. This was connected to the “national revival” of the 19th century and to the activity of national intellectuals Myhajlo Maksymovych (1804–1873), Mykola Kostomarov (1817–1885), Pantaleimon Kulish (1819–1897) or Volodymyr Antonovych (1834–1908). Consequently, historiosophy, as a reflection on the historical dimension of the existence of the Ukrainian nation became a characteristic feature of the national philosophical tradition. Moreover, the very same period witnessed also an increasing interest in theoretical problems of historical knowledge.

One of the most important Ukrainian political thinkers of the second half of the 19th century was indubitably Myhailo Drahomanov. He was born in 1841 in the territories of the then Little Russia (town of Hadiach) in a family descending from Cossack *starsbina* (officer-ship), who received Russian nobility. After graduating from the Saint Vladimir University in Kiev, he remained at the university hoping for

⁹ The concept of science used here follows the Ukrainian meaning of *nauka*, which encompasses natural, human and social sciences – J.S.

a professorship. In Kiev he took part in the meetings of the ukrainophile organization “Hromada” (*Community*). In 1876 he was expelled from the university for political activism and was forced to emigrate. In the same year he began to publish in Geneva a journal called *Hromada* (*Community*). In the last years of his life, Drahomanov taught as professor of general history at the Sofia High School (forerunner of the “St. Kliment Ohridski” University of Sofia). In a nutshell, his political views can be described as a very individual synthesis of socialism, liberalism and anarchism and he is credited to have influenced a whole generation of ukrainophile intellectuals both in Ukraine and in Galicia.

Drahomanov’s acquaintance with the positivist ideas began with his *gymnasium* teacher in Poltava, Oleksander Stronin (1826–1889). Drahomanov remembered later that Stronin taught him: “If you want to do philosophy, you have to be conscious not to fall into the trap of abstraction without a factual foundation.”¹⁰ Stronin, who was later exiled to Archangelsk Oblast, wrote there his known works *Istoriia i metod* (History and method, 1869), *Politika kak nauka* (Politics as science, 1872) and *Istroïia obshchestvennosti* (History of the public sphere, 1886), where he presented himself as a follower of positivist approach in historiography and sociology.

Drohomanov’s ideas presented his contemporaries the possible ways to separate the theoretical historical factors (*pobudov*) from the sphere of national ideology and to replace the dogmatic view of history by one based on principles of the positivist scientificity. In his writing, one also finds a syncretic moment of unanimity of historiographical, sociological and philosophical-historical problematics.

As many other Ukrainian (little-Russian) intellectuals of the second half of the 19th century, Drahomanov identified the factors of historical development not in the religious-mystical sphere, as it was characteristic for the romanticist thinkers, but in the rational sphere. The fundamental principle of this idea was that society develops according to certain laws. It was the search for these laws that became the main aim of positivism-oriented philosophers, historians and sociologists.

In his magister’s dissertation *The Problem of the Historical Significance of the Roman Empire and Tacitus* (*Vopros ob istoricheskom znachenii Rimskoi*

¹⁰ Drahomanov 1991, p. 596.

imperii i Tatsit, 1869), Drahomanov made the mere fact of existence of a philosophy of history, which he understood as an “assessment of the present and of the past”, dependent on the relation of the ideal to the reality. So far, the ideal has been reduced to three options: a) either one believed, that an ideal order existed in the past; b) or one thought that realization of the ideal is not possible in this life, but only in the ideal life; or, c) one argued that a gradual betterment is possible even in the current world, and that the desire to improve the world would lead to making the real life similar to the ideal one. It was this third ideal that Drahomanov called the theory of progress.¹¹ In fact, it seems that in his writings all modern philosophy of history is possible only in the terms of theory of progress. And this is perfectly consistent with the representatives of the early positivism like John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), who wrote in his *A System of Logic* (1843, Russian translation 1865–1867), that “philosophy of history” is at the same time a verification and an initial form of “the philosophy of the progress of society”.¹²

The theory of progress is on its turn a part of a broader concept of historical law and patterns. According to Drahomanov, only by accepting the idea of progress can one find a stable basis for the recognition of patterns from the historical events.¹³

The Ukrainian scholar followed the sociological theory of historical progress and the search for a sociological concept of historical laws was for him the main task of historical research. He understood the

¹¹ Drahomanov 2011, p. 40.

¹² Mill’ 2011, p. 689 (Mill 1843, p. 611). In the second half of the 19th century another line of positivist epistemology of history appeared, leading from Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884) through Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911) and further to the so-called Baden School (Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert). Droysen, criticizing in his review “The Elevation of History to the Rank of Science” (“Erhebung der Geschichte zum Rang einer Wissenschaft”, 1863) the main ideas of Buckle’s *History of Civilization in England* (1857–1861), wrote that the method of historical knowledge is not explaining historical facts, but putting them together in law-like connections, as well as the understanding of human acts [Drojzen 2004, p. 538]. He also disagreed with perceptions of the past that left no place for free human actions, but described everything through the prism of laws and patterns, analogically to natural laws, beginning with progress that moves by itself. This anti-positivistic movement did not, however, play any role in the 19th century Ukrainian theory of history.

¹³ Drahomanov 2011, p. 41.

history in the Comtean sense, as a social science, whose aim is to analyse the social dynamics.¹⁴ History was thus for him a constituent of the science of sociology, that studied the past society.

Drahomanov followed the realist positivistic notion of the ideal scientificity, which says that there is one right way of doing science, with natural sciences as the ideal. Social sciences and humanities, i.e. also history, should comply with it if they want to remain truly scientific. For this reason, Drahomanov believed in history as an objective science and he meticulously sought for possible connections of history's epistemology with the one of natural sciences.¹⁵ Hence his focus on their methods. Thus Drahomanov considered the concept of "historical law" from the naturalist perspective and neither asked the question about differences between cognitive and natural phenomena nor about contradictions between those two. And here, in fact, he followed the idea of the "father" of positivism, Auguste Comte, which another representative of early positivism, Mill, completed as follows:

Their [social sciences] method, in short, is the Concrete Deductive Method: that of which astronomy furnishes the most perfect, natural philosophy a somewhat less perfect, example, and the employment of which, with the adaptations and precautions required by the subject, is beginning to regenerate physiology.¹⁶

With the help of the newly discovered concept of evolution in the natural sciences, Drahomanov tries to justify the absurdity of the idea of revolutionary leaps in the development of the society:

Recently also the natural sciences, geology and biology, have shown how long it takes for changes to take place and replaced the word revolution by evolution [...]. The

¹⁴ Drahomanov 1991, p. 78.

¹⁵ Drahomanov 1991, p. 77.

¹⁶ Mill' 2011, p. 665 (Mill 1843, pp. 561–562). One of the first „little-Russian“ philosophers who started to transfer biological laws to the history of society was already Lesevych. He saw the search for such laws as the main duty of sociologists. He argued that sociological laws must be studied “in the sense of their imminent subordination to the natural laws” [Lesevych 1869, p. 172].

new natural science has to teach anew the literate people and in their ideas on how to change social order, unlearn them from seeing their interests as most important in the state affairs and state changes, from being eager to make revolutions, upheavals...¹⁷

Drahomanov begins constructing his idea of historical law¹⁸ by stating the impossibility of stabilizing them in the manner of unmediated concreteness of single historical facts:

If we see in the history – he writes – a whole series of facts of one sort and remove their birthmarks, in many cases it will become clear that some historical phenomena repeat themselves under certain circumstances – and this conclusion is already a law in history. If the observation will show that certain phenomena appear with less intensity or cease to appear, because known condition, which supported them, grow weaker or stop to exist, this observation will similarly lead us to yet another law, that is, in fact, to the same one but differently expressed.¹⁹

Thus, historical laws are generalizations of these recurring images, which are brought forward to existence by certain conditions. Laws can be located in the mind, since they are formulated because of mental processes of abstraction and generalization. If such recurring images are a result of perceived similarity of several concrete historical facts, which, in their turn, can only exist in their original singular uniqueness, they exist outside of given time and space, out of given geography and chronology; they are formulated, according to Drahomanov, by the means of logical systematization. Drahomanov's comparative method

¹⁷ Drahomanov 1878, p. 70.

¹⁸ Mill, however, sees this situation in more nuanced manner and distinguishes between laws in history and laws in sociology according to their level of generality. For him "History accordingly does, when judiciously examined, afford Empirical Laws of Society. And the problem of general sociology is to ascertain these, and connect them with the laws of human nature, by deductions showing that such were the derivative laws naturally to be expected as the consequences of those ultimate ones" [Mill' 2011, p. 680 (Mill 1843, p. 593)]

¹⁹ Drahomanov 1991, p. 78.

(and actually also the one proposed by Comte), represents this logical principle,²⁰ which aims at looking for patterns in groups according to the principle of similarity of classes of certain historical facts. It is exactly at the level of statics where one can observe a certain homogeneity resulting from a comparison of a number of historical facts, which leads to the idea of a law. Sociological statics (immutability of the law) in a sense “covers” the sociological dynamics (temporal changeability of given sociological facts). From the point of view of the sociology, history reaches the status of science only if it follows the trail of recognizing general laws. Knowledge of singular historical facts has no value for history. For Drahomanov the comparative method appears not only as an instrument of investigation, but also as an axiological component of his positivistic style of thought. This method becomes in fact an evolutionary-causal criterion of value of historical sciences.

Further Drahomanov wrote also about the practical importance of history. The requirement of a practical significance of historical investigations can mean that: a) since history discovers the law-making patterns and a law is something temporary invariable, knowing how a given law is working at one moment, one can predict the future. This means that one can know with certainty that this law will work in the same way in the time to come. For the people it remains only “to act in agreement with the direction of the flow of the history.”²¹ b) History should have educational functions, i.e. give people the sense of a rightful moral behaviour. The result is, however, a contradiction to the principle of objectivity of the historical knowledge. If a metaphor of objective knowledge is an exact copy of a certain historical object in the consciousness of a subject without transferring values of this subject into the objective knowledge, then the realization of the educational function – the other way round – involves an identification of the individual with some (subjective) values/convictions of a group, and hence a selective approach to history. Indeed, no historical facts can serve as values for the group.

Thus, according to Drahomanov, the theory of progress constitutes a basis for the construction of an idea of historical regularity

²⁰ Drahomanov 1991, p. 81.

²¹ Drahomanov 1991, p. 78.

(*zакonomirnost*). Progress of the human society is conceived not only as a temporary sequence of a certain class of historical facts, but also as a law, as a necessary and unconditional movement from the beginnings of the human culture to its current state. At the very heart of this conception of progress lies the idea that the progress is a linear development. The theory of linear development was based on the scientific worldview of the modern times that explained the development of the society by laws of a mechanical form of movement. The idea of progress as a constant movement forward, as a passage from the lower stages of development to the higher ones, emerged as a secular version of the Christian view of history, when the need of a divine revelation was refuted. Also this idea is based on faith, but in this case it is the faith in the power of reason. Progress can be conceptualized twofold: belief in progress as an endless ascending development, which has no limits, or a belief in progress as a development, which finally leads to the perfect state of society.

Already Mill formulated the positivist model of the law of progress in a following way:

[this] law, once ascertained, must [...] enable us to predict future events, just as after a few terms of an infinite series in algebra we are able to detect the principle, of regularity in their formation, and to predict the rest of the series to any number of terms we please.²²

In this way, the main feature both of historical law and of progress as one of its main manifestations, is for the positivists its prognostic function.

It was precisely the influence of positivism, which made the doctrine of progress the “commonplace” for Ukrainian intellectuals of the second half of the 19th century. For Drahomanov it was not only a realization of progress in three temporal dimensions of the social reality, but also the idea of progress itself that influenced the development of the society. Moreover, he wrote about the progress of the idea of progress as something primary to thinking about social and industrial development. Here he also followed Comte and his main general law – the

²² Mill’ 2011, p. 679 (Mill 1843, p. 590).

theory of three stages of mental development of humanity (theological, metaphysical and positive). For Comte, the law of three stages embodies the primacy of human spirit over biology when he explains the human evolution. He writes:

The history of humanity is directed by the history of human spirit, and this spirit follows a direction that is prescribed by its own nature. Ideas develop in a kind of spontaneous way, whereas new ideas appear as a result of natural development of the old ones.²³

Mill similarly considered “every considerable advance in material civilization” to be “preceded by an advance in knowledge.” He wrote further:

order of human progression in all respects will mainly depend on the order of progression in the intellectual convictions of mankind, that is, on the law of the successive transformations of human opinions.²⁴

Finally, Buckle, an English historian who was the first to apply the principles of positivist doctrine to the science of history agreed with it, writing that “social phenomena were subordinate to their physical laws.”²⁵

In one of his latest publicist works *Paradise and progress* (Raj i postup, 1894)²⁶ Drahomanov once more retraced the history of the emergence and development of the *idea* of progress. In his eyes only the idea of progress can adequately explain humanity’s past, present and future.²⁷

²³ Quoted after Shapiro 1993, pp. 490–491.

²⁴ Mill’ 2011, p. 688 (Mill 1843, p. 609).

²⁵ Bokl’ 2000, p. 90 (Buckle 1861, p. 99). Echoing this idea, another representative of the positivistic doctrine, Lesevych, characterized social progress as a pursuit of the ideas of humanity and regarded mental activity as the main moving force of progress. (Lesevych 1869, p. 168). In his eyes a given level of development of mental abilities is also the main criterion of progress. (Lesevych 1869, p. 178).

²⁶ This work was first published in the *Kolomyia* journal of the Ruthenian-Ukrainian radical party, *Narod* (1894, № 6–12). Interestingly, nine years later in the same journal Ivan Franko, who was influenced by Drahomanov, presented an analysis of the ideas of his teacher, publishing a popular science work “What is progress” (Shcho take postup?, 1903).

²⁷ Drahomaniv 1915, p. 62.

However, the history of humanity is a history of spirit, is a history of formation of the people's thought, which develops into the direction of the positive thought. The idea that the development of human spirit is the most characteristic aspect of all historical changes, because "ideas control the world" comes from Comte. Drahomanov finds the earliest formations of the idea of progress in the contexts of religious type of consciousness of people from ancient civilizations, who, dissatisfied with their current situation, formulated imaginations of a Golden Age, which was located not in the future but in the past long gone. This is how the ideas of golden, silver, copper and iron age in human history emerged in the writings of the old-Greek writer and agronomist Hesiod or those of the Roman poet Ovid.

In the dualistic religion of ancient Persians, Zoroastrianism, the picture of a former happy life is transferred also to the present and the future: when the forces of good, led by Ohrmazd, will defeat in the final battle the forces of evil led by Ahriman, then the paradise on the earth will follow. Ancient Jews adopted this idea of paradise on earth from the Persians. Similarly, Bible's prophetic books and then the story of the Messiah, paint us a picture of God's kingdom on Earth. In contrast, Christianity follows the idea of chiliasm – thousand-year long kingdom of Christ.

The very history of the idea of progress begins, according to Drahomanov, after the Middle Ages, because it is primarily a secular idea. In the early modern European history, people begin to change their view concerning the world and start to see their happy future originating from their own efforts. Here the desirable social order and human wellbeing are transformed in the literary genre of utopia, and from the 17th century, scientific revolution changes the idea of priorities of temporal modes. Now humanity does not follow a thread of development from the antiquity when people were wiser and more intelligent than nowadays, but it is the present and the future that become the embodiments of humanity's development. Utopism creates an image of a perfect state and through the act of faith makes it possible everywhere.

The emergence of the idea of humanity's progress is tantamount to an adequate perception of social activity, because this activity itself develops according to the laws of progress. Drahomanov sees in the writings of Turgot (1727–1781) and Concordet (1743–1794) the crucial impulses for the dissemination of the idea of progress, with the

latter enlarging this idea to the whole past of the humankind. After their writings, it became evident that only by envisioning the history of the whole humanity and not of singular nations, one can discern the moment of continuity of the progress, because at the level of nations there exists a possibility of worsening of its historical state and even of its demise. Progress can thus be seen only from the perspective of totality.²⁸ Consequently, “the truthfulness of thought about the progress is being supplemented by the very growth of this thought, because one sees in the growth also the development in time.”²⁹

Based on the positivistic guidelines, Drahomanov criticizes the idea of „unconditional progress“, which he locates in the German speculative philosophy and in particular in the writings of Hegel (1770–1831). Drahomanov rejects the providentialism of this history, the construction of the idea of a “plan” of history, its national arrogance and the arbitrariness of the choice of the nation which is being chosen by the spirit. Following Hegel, one would contradict the verity, since “taking randomly single features, single epochs, from the history of every nation, we are putting together an artificial chain of nations and create a fatalistic doctrine about a mission and change of nations”³⁰ – he wrote already in his master thesis.

In general, Drahomanov was quite sympathetic to the following positivistic theory of progress: a) the progress of human life is implemented according to the laws, to the epochs, which change not in a fatalistic manner (as in the theory of mission of nations), but in an organic and logical way, following one another; b) this progress depends on the continuous progress of mental development; c) the progress of civilization manifests itself and stimulates the growth of scientific, moral and political consciousness.³¹

Drahomanov, possibly under the influence of romantics, and actually similarly to another historian, Mykola Kostomarov, divides history

²⁸ This idea appears already in the master thesis of Drahomanov: „According to another formula, whole humanity is one single organism, which progresses and improves not in separate parts (nations), but in the general mass whose parts (nations) are but steps of the general development” (Drahomanov 2011, p. 221).

²⁹ Drahomanov 1991, p. 64.

³⁰ Drahomanov 2011, pp. 227–228.

³¹ Drahomanov 2011, pp. 374–375].

into an internal and external one. The external history is a history of states, a history of often random – i.e. not in accordance with the laws – attacks and conquests of one nation over the others and here the progress does not always happen. But the internal history is always a field of implementation of the law of progress. And since progress is for Drahomanov happening in the first place at the level of human thought and not at the level of technology or economics, thus such thought will be active mostly in the sphere directly affected by it, that is in the internal history of nations.³² In fact, for Drahomanov progress is a category pertaining mostly to the scientific, moral, religious and aesthetic consciousness and is not a progress of economy or trade. Progress becomes for him an issue of direction of movement toward higher levels of spiritual culture and social justice.

One further point connecting Drahomanov to the theoretical teachings of positivism is the multifactorial determinism, that is the understanding of the historical progress as a result of influence of several factors, a combination of social and natural forces. In addition, we can find here the geographical determinism of Montesquieu (1689–1755), after Buckle's modification, where major factors causing the development of the society were climate, food, soil and landscape. Further, as has been shown already, Drahomanov adds the role of human reason to the geographical factors. In addition, he believes that a historian should “analyse the internal causes of historical events and changes – cultural, economic, social and political ones,”³³ especially in combinations.

The theory of multiple factors, of principles determining historical events and phenomena, allowed for a search for patterns of historical processes and played a positive role in the development of the theory of history. Having commenced from this theory, Drahomanov rejected the use of one-factor (economical) approach to the explanation of moving forces of the historical process by the Marxist theorists. Concerning Engels's version of historical materialism, he wrote:

You know that I cannot agree to an exclusively economic philosophy of history and politics; this I regard as a sort of

³² Drahomanov 2011, p. 407.

³³ Drahomanov 2011, p. 40.

metaphysics. Human life is too complex to be explained by only one element... Unfortunately the followers of Marx, or rather those of Engels, seldom investigate anything; they rather draw a priori, and often completely arbitrary, historical and political figures.³⁴

We thus see that Drahomanov was interested both in the general philosophical aspects of positivism and in the methodological aspects of this doctrine. The components of this interest are his general admiration for the phenomenon of science, the natural-scientific analogies in the understanding of social and human sciences, the application of the idea of law to a historical process, the predominance of spiritual development in his thinking about progress and the multi-factor approach to the explanation of the moving forces of history. As one can observe already in his master's thesis, he declared his rejection of the speculative approach to general history. But Drahomanov can be called a positivist only in the broadest sense of this word, since he was never a dogmatic follower of the positivistic doctrine, and in this regard he even wrote that he does "not stand for any priests of science, positivist-doctrinaires."³⁵

3. Pantaleimon Kulish: from positivism to "village philosophy"

Another father of the Ukrainian national idea who was interested in its historical fundamentals was Pantaleimon Kulish (1819–1897). Like Drahomanov, he was also born at the territories of late Little Russia, in Voronizh in Chernigov Governorate (now in Sumy Oblast). And similarly, he was a descendant of a former Cossack *starshyna*. A man with controversial outlooks, Kulish spent his whole life on the project of new Ukrainian culture. He was active as a poet and writer, a folklorist and a translator, an editor and a historian. He was the translator of the Bible into Ukrainian and the author of the first alphabet for Ukrainian, so-called "kulishivka", which became the basis of the modern Ukrainian alphabet. While frequenting the Kiev University, not

³⁴ Drahomanov 191, p. 122 (English quote after Rudnycky 1952).

³⁵ Drahomanov 1914, p. 132.

officially as a student due to his lack of nobility, he took part in the activities of the slavophile and ukrainophile organization Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius (1845–1847), for which he was exiled to the city of Tula (south of Moscow) for three years. Later he was allowed to work in imperial bureaucracy, among others in 1864–1868 in Warsaw, continuously publishing in historiography, ethnography and *belles-lettres*. He spent the last years of his life in the village of Motronivka near the city of Bornza, where he died on 14th February 1897.³⁶

In the late-romantic period of his activity, that is in the 1870s and 1880s, Kulish often recurred to the methodology of positivism while interpreting the historical process. His positivism was, however, not a very deeply rooted one, although beginning with the 1860s he read and scrutinized writings of Comte, Spencer, Mill, Buckle and Ernst Renan.³⁷ One could assume that it was the use of organicist metaphors which facilitated his transition from romanticism to positivism. Since, in the terms of methodological monism, positivism – already since Comte-took the natural and exact sciences as a model, the social and human sciences should follow the method, the laws and the language of biology if they want to reach “true” scientificity. In the social philosophy and sociology of positivism individuals thus become “cells”, social institutions become “organs”, human relations are “functions of organs” and human community is given the name of “organism”. Subsequently, positivists were trying to use the laws identified while observing living biological organisms to these metaphors. Following the tradition of Comte and Spencer, Kulish was also convinced that “[...] our past requires from us a detailed study, according to the method of naturalists [...]”. Then he also applies the conception of temporal invariability of laws that was mentioned already above. Thus, one can predict the future while being rooted in the present. Using mathematics as a model, Kulish writes:

our future will cease to be for us an incomprehensible play of fortuitous events when history as a science, having been recognized with the help of a full complement of human

³⁶ Luckyj, 1983.

³⁷ One should also add here, that books of these classics of positivism were also in his personal library, see Nahlik 2007, pp. 14–16.

knowledge, provides us with the facts of our past with the same specificity as mathematics presents its theorems.³⁸

As we see, for Kulish, there is an uninterrupted continuity between past, present and the future:

Standing on a meeting point of two trails, which go from us in opposite directions, that is between the end of what is past and beginning of what will come, we have to consecutively apply the laws which act in both these trails to every phenomenon of life, to every century-old development of the past.³⁹

Thus, if we will learn to know the past in a correct way, if our knowledge is adequate to the past reality, this helps us to understand the present in a better way. And the understanding of the present helps us also to predict reliably the future.

These influxes of positivism in late-romanticist worldview of Kulish lead him not only to reject the history being perceived only in the terms of romantic values, like absolutization of moral-aesthetic norms, but also from the point of view of the natural law, which he transfers into the social sphere.

However, one can find the description of the continuity between old and new as a law already in his early writing, *Zapiski o Iuzhnoi Rusi* (*Notes on Southern Rus'*, 1856–7):

History has surprised us already many times with the emergence of a new deeply-rooted life force from the ruins, which was almost immobilized by the remnants of the past order of things and by the turbulent masses of the new but unformed phenomena; but history never departed from the laws of accordance (*zakoniv pryymstva*) of new and old times.⁴⁰

Moreover, Kulish understands such a connection between the old and the new, between the past and the present, not only as a step in

³⁸ Kulish 1874, p. 371. (I thank Tom Nemeth for his useful hints for this translation – J.S.)

³⁹ Kulish 1874, p. 371.

⁴⁰ Kulish 1856, 183.

a causal chain. For him it is also as an organic relation, when the actions of the ancestors “intertwine” in the present and influence the fate of the children.

The history of our ancestors inevitably influences the events of the nowadays; the deeds of our ancestors – whatever they would be, small or big, disgraceful or laudable – will irreversibly rule over the fate of our children and of the children of our children, like a mysterious, inevitable zodiac.⁴¹

The life of people living in the present is not an act of free will. It is influenced in both positive and negative ways by the life of the fathers. Thus, a people (*narod*) is in a way an organic unity of generations, since the ancestors have an “unescapable” influence on the deeds of their descendants.⁴² What follows is that the achievements of the national spirit in the past will have consequences on the contemporary “little-Russian tribe”.

Further, Kulish speaks about the criteria of significance of the the past events. His main concept to frame these criteria is force (*syla*). The concept of force can be explained in pantheist-romantic terms, bearing witness to Spinoza’s influence on Kulish,⁴³ but another interpretation is also possible, i.e. in the spirit of Spencer, for whom the “invisible force” is prime to the matter and the continuity of the movement, through which it manifests itself.⁴⁴ Thus, according to Kulish,

force in history is the sole measure of significance, since it expresses vitality (*zhiznennost*), and vitality means a right to life. This is an immutable truth. Everything that is secretly scratched off from “the book of life” by the hand that reigns over the world is false. For this reason, in natural

⁴¹ Kulish 1874, p. 156.

⁴² One can add that the unity of generations in three temporary modes as a sign of organic unity of a nation, can be found in the name of a poem of Taras Shevchenko – “To the Dead, the Living, and to Those Yet Unborn, My Countrymen all Who Live in Ukraine and Outside Ukraine” (1845).

⁴³ Shurat 1922.

⁴⁴ The Russian translation of “First Principles” appeared 1867, and it is where – analyzing the unknowable in the first chapter – he speaks about the force as a basis of all existence.

history, whether it is aware of nature's operations or not, the stronger of two or more opponents is the one that is right. The one who succeeds is right; the victor is right. He is right as long as he is victorious.⁴⁵

In this way, based on the ideological-philosophical ideas of the romanticism and enriching them with positivism, Kulish developed his historiosophy toward a rejection of panslavism and messianism, which were so important, for example, for the famous historian and friend of Kulish, Mykola Kostomarov. What united these two thinkers was the idea of dependence of a nation's history on God's Providence and providentialism as the main force in the interpretation of the historical project. Additionally, Kulish stated that the direction of history's development, which expresses the "spirit of nation," is indicated at first by the "top strata", "nation's aristocracy." The downfall and degeneration of Ukraine happened through a penetration of "Ukrainian sprit" by foreign elements, which resulted in the appearance of people who are "weak" in spirit, *bolota*. The healing of the history of the Ukrainian nation is possible only through the return to the traditions of Ukrainian way of life, which Kulish developed in his "village philosophy" (*but-irs'ka filosofiya*).

4. Ivan Franko and multifactoriality of historical development

Another Ukrainian intellectual, whose connections with positivism are as complicated as in the case of Drahomanov, is Ivan Franko (1856–1916). Born in the Eastern Galicia (village of Nahuievychi near Drohobych) in a family of village blacksmiths, he entered the annals as a famous scholar and the foremost Ukrainian writer. As far as patriotic imagination is concerned, Franko occupies a second place in the national literary pantheon, only behind the poet Taras Shevchenko. Franko's ideology changed several times over his life, evolving from socialism to nationalism, with positivism being one of important sources of inspiration in his young years.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Kulish 1874, pp. 371–372.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. Hrycak 2006.

Positivism influenced both Franko's ideological evolution and his scientific and literary activities. The theoretical foundations of his thought were formed in the 1870s and thus at the beginning of his writing career, as a true son of his time, he could not escape the ideals of scientificity of the social sciences. Alongside positivism, it was social-Darwinism that also influenced him, as well as various versions of socialist teachings. It is worth adding that young Franko did not try to contrast positivism with Marxism. For him, they were two clearly related doctrines, which – with the help of the idea of progress that both of them developed – indicated the path to a happy future for the humanity.

The period after the time of fascination with Marxism (1877–1881) is the time when one can see how intensive the inclination of Franko to use elements of positivistic doctrines truly was. Here one has to agree with the researchers who show that the initial impulse for Franko to study the works of positivists came from Drahomanov, with whom Franko actively cooperated and under whose ideological influence he had come for a longer time.⁴⁷

Another person who had a great influence on young Franko's interest in positivism was a Polish philosopher and psychologist Julian Ochorowicz (1850–1917). As *Privatdozent* in the philosophy at the University of Lviv Ochorowicz taught the newest philosophical currents in his seminars, including Comte's and Spencer's positivism in connection with the materialist philosophy of Büchner and Huxley.⁴⁸ In the semester 1879/1880 – as a student – Franko frequented Ochorowicz's courses: "History of psychology," "On prehistoric human," and "Exercises in Philosophy", and participated in his psychological seminar. Also works of Mill and Spencer found their place on his bookshelf at the time.

It should be emphasized that Franko could hardly escape the strong influence of the positivist doctrine, which not only shook the foundations of understanding of speculative concepts, undermined the position of providentialism, but also inspired the search for new sources, at the same time enriching the understanding of the past and the development of new methods of its analysis. Positivism also helped to affirm both the objective laws, inherent to the historical process, as well

⁴⁷ E.g. Hrycak 2006, pp. 238–240.

⁴⁸ Danylovyh 1981, p. 171.

as the progressive, forward-oriented drive of history. Hence, although never a blind follower of the positivist canons, Franko shared a common attitude with positivists, an attitude often equated with the scientific approach, and readily applied a number of positivist ideas both in his young years, and also at a later stage of his intellectual career.⁴⁹

The first thing that young Franko appropriated from positivism (of course not having yet research experience into the analysis of the historical process), is the idea that the methodology used in natural sciences and the methodology of the historical investigation are the same. The other one is equating the laws of the sociocultural world and the domain of nature. Thus “social sciences can in no way break away from the foundation of general natural sciences, because only on this foundation can they grow.”⁵⁰ According to Franko, there is but one ideal of scientificity, most fully realized in the natural and exact sciences – and in accordance to it, historical sciences should simply copy it (famously, Comte also called sociology “social physics”). When defining historical sciences, Franko writes in an article “Ideas about Evolution in the History of Humanity” (*Mysli o evolyuciyi v istoriyi lyuds’kosti*) that originally appeared in 1881–1882:

we understand history as discovering the inner connection between facts, that is such grouping of single facts – both more and less important – so that they make some sense, i.e. that one can discern a particular basic natural law that governs and causes them.⁵¹

Again, if the “natural facts” are the basis of historical facts then the human history is not excluded from the natural life. Therefore, “precisely the same biological laws, discovered by biological sciences,” can easily be “applied to the human, to the society with all its material and spiritual achievements.”⁵²

Based on the primacy of mathematic-naturalist criteria of scientificity, the young Franko states that historical science “did not reach the

⁴⁹ Cf. Zahara 1998.

⁵⁰ Franko 1986b, p. 83.

⁵¹ Franko 1986b, p. 77.

⁵² Franko 1986b, p. 82.

degree of certainty as did the mathematics or astronomy” did not yet reach and “we can be certain that it will never reach.”⁵³ Is it thus possible that history is another type of science with its own criteria of scientificity? Understandably, Franko did not pose such questions at the time, but he stated that history becomes a constant reinterpretation. It is being improved “by the historian with his own mind, his own logic and his own sensitivity (*chuttia*). And how he improves it depends on the conditions under which his mind and feeling developed. History forever remains a building, which every new generation reconstructs and renovates according to its own needs, to its own outlooks.”⁵⁴

In another of his early articles – “Nauka i yiyi vzayemyny z pracyuyuchymy klasamy” (Science and its relation to the working classes, 1878) – Franko gives a classification of all sciences, where one also finds positivist ideas about intellectual structures. Dividing sciences into two kinds, i.e. those studying the outside world (natural sciences) and those dealing with people (anthropological sciences), Franko, similar to Comte later, crowns the whole building of human sciences with ethics.⁵⁵ He calls science, which is just one level below ethics, “social economy”, similar to Mill.⁵⁶

Beginning with the second half of the 1890s, we can discern a significant transformation in Franko’s interpretation of some of the principles of functioning of the society and of the ways of imagining it. He actively begins to criticize the Marxist version of socialism, and simultaneously the people (*narod*) cease to be the subject of the historical process. Instead, he centres his views on the phenomenon of nation (*naciya*), highlighting the role of heroic personalities in its history. At this stage there is no simple copying of positivist ideas, but some original steps in Franko’s thought, which, however, still has much in common with the positivist theory.⁵⁷ This is especially true for the theory of several

⁵³ Franko 1986b, p. 77.

⁵⁴ Franko 1986b, p. 77.

⁵⁵ Franko 1986a, p. 39.

⁵⁶ Franko 1986a, p. 39.

⁵⁷ Particularly the new positivist achievements draw his attention in the article “From the secrets of poetic creativity” (*Iz sekretiv poetichnoyi tvorchosti*) (1898), for example the teaching of psychology of the subconscious and its application to the sphere of aesthetics.

“factors” of historical development in the positivist doctrine and some similar questions inspired by it, discussed in his article “Poza mezhamy mozhyvoho” (Beyond the possible, 1900).⁵⁸

What are the causes of the history’s movement? And particularly, how many causes are there? Marxism asserted the crucial role in history to the economic factors. In contrast to the traditional view of Marxism with its “unilateral” approach to the causes of arrival of historical events, positivism proposed the idea of multifactoriality, which appears in the theory of interaction of countless factors of the social life.⁵⁹

Historical regularity consists of a set of external factors and determines the movement of history in the most general terms. This means that the idea of one predominant historical law changes in positivism into a theory of multifactoriality of the historical process. In this way, history becomes the outcome of the concurrent interactions of a variety of factors: economic, legal, moral, religious etc., all of which are considered to be “hidden forces” (*pryhovani syly*). Understandably, none of these factors is predominant. In the nineteenth century, the positivists Comte, Buckle, and Taine disseminated these ideas. As the example of the idea of multifactoriality we can refer to the reflections of Mill, who wrote that in contrast to the science of an individual man, social sciences and social relations are a more complex issue, since

the number of concurrent causes, all exercising more or less influence on the total effect, is greater, in the proportion in which a nation, or the species at large, exposes a larger surface to the operation of agents, psychological and physical, than any single individual.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Franko 1986f.

⁵⁹ In the classic Marxist theory, however, one can find contradictions to the idea that there is only *one* decisive factor. For example late Engels writes in a letter to Bloch: “history is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant — the historical event.” [8, c. 373] (Engels 1972 [1890]). If we take this quotation out of the context of the letter, it might seem that also Engels believed in the theory of multifactoriality of the historical process.

⁶⁰ Mill’ 2011, p. 650 (Mill 1843, p. 531).

Another advocate of the application of positivist principles to historical sciences, Buckle, considered material factors to exert most influence on the development of society. In the first place he named geographical factors: climate, soil and food. Then, according to Buckle, with passing time and the development of the society, spiritual and moral factors grow in importance. Taine proposes a theory, first formulated in the introduction to the first volume of *History of English Literature* (1863), according to which history moves under joint influence of three factors: “race” (natural and national peculiarities), “surroundings” (climatic and geographical conditions as well as social and political circumstances) and the concrete historical “momentum” (interaction of “race” and “surroundings” with historical tradition). In his article *Najnovishi napryamky v narodoznavstvi* (Latest trends in ethnography), inspired by Taine, Franko asserts that

the development of all folk (*hnyd*) depends more on constant causes, like climate, race (or mixture of races), geographical configuration and geological structure of the region, proximity to other peoples (*narod*) etc., than on reasons like wars, good or evil kings, higher or lower number of famous and prominent men etc.⁶¹

Meanwhile, Franko tried to apply the very idea of multifactoriality to the sphere of Ukrainian national life. If we analyse a particular historical event, then the idea of one single causal factor for the appearance of this event is not feasible, it becomes too abstract. Franko criticizes Marxism that instead of “understanding the multidimensional forces in the history of humanity” it takes a one-sided position of “economic materialism and fatalism.”

For Marx and his followers – he continues – the history of human civilization was in the first place a history of human production. From the production of material goods, like offshoots from a trunk, grew both the social and the political forms of society, as well as the preferences, the scientific concepts, the ethical and all the other ideals as well.⁶²

⁶¹ Franko 1986d, p. 261.

⁶² Franko 1986f, p. 283.

Of course, material production plays an important role in the historical process, but for Franko it is obvious that the intellectual (and even imaginary) conditions of this production matter as well. In fact, he asks what “drives a man to production, to creation of economic goods? Is it only the question of filling the stomach?”⁶³ and then continues:

No, it is a complex of his physical and spiritual needs that are to be satisfied. Production, restless and more and more intensive cultural work – they are the outcome of the needs and the ideals of the society. Only there, where the ideals are alive, where they develop and grow higher and higher, do we have a progressive and more and more intensive material production.⁶⁴

Such ideals that cause the movement of Ukrainian history include the ideals of Ukrainian political sovereignty. And even if such an ideal, like “a synthesis of desires, needs and struggles” is from the point of view of the current situation “beyond the possible”, then

only from our consciousness of these ideal, from our approval of it will depend if we will follow the paths toward it or if we will turn to completely different ones.⁶⁵

Thus – instead of the “materialist fatalism” – Franko clearly proposes to see the basis of the historical process in the interaction of at least two factors: an economic one and an idealistic one. In the analysis of a concrete historical event we can see that there can be even more factors responsible for the occurrence of this or other situation. But sometimes – as in the case of Ukrainian political nation – the idealistic factor takes the lead and influences the material one. Therefore, the Ukrainian nation comes into being not only as a result of objective processes of social life, but also through a subjective intellectual construct.

Franko considers his ideas and especially his approach to social life often as rationalism. It is, however, clear that rationalism does not

⁶³ Franko 1986f, p. 283

⁶⁴ Franko 1986f, pp. 283–284.

⁶⁵ Franko 1986f, p. 285.

represent a philosophical category here; traditional rationalism means orientation toward confidence in the existence of the idea of sensory experience, especially the use of the deductive method in the cognitive process and thus a practice of speculative deduction with certain *a priori* axioms. At this point it is appropriate to mention René Descartes with his “inborn” ideas and contrast them with the conviction of the young Franko, who believed that “true science has nothing in common with any supernatural forces, with any *innate ideas*, with any internal words, which control the outside world.”⁶⁶

In this case one should understand Franko’s rationalism rather in the everyday sense of this word as the desire to use logic for the analysis of actual problems.⁶⁷ If one wants to draw some conclusions about the dominant method used in his studies, it is rather an inductive one, merged with an empirical way of obtaining new knowledge.

Exploring the problem of empiricism, one should in the first place look at the ideas of the “early” Franko, stating that science reveals the facts simply as a “reflection of reality and of the living nature in the human mind.”⁶⁸ In “Ukraina iredenta” (1895) Franko states that

a historian-evolutionist knows well that there are no simple facts, that every fact is an attainment of an indefinite number of other facts and every conclusion from the previous facts to future facts is a conclusion from the little known to the even less known.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Franko 1986a, p. 32, my accentuation.

⁶⁷ Here one can remind the most successful deliberations on Franko’s “everyday rationalism” by an Ukrainian poet and publicist Evgeni Malanyuk (1897–1968). Malanyuk writes in one of his articles that “with all indubitable temperament of Franko, with all the heat of his heart, the feelings of Franko in his poetic work always pass through the fine filter of his intellect. One can even risk a statement that he was able to transform his indubitably emotional energy into intellectual energy, appease forces of “Dionysian” character into controlled “apollonian” ones. [...] The world of his feelings, inner “elements” of his being, [...] was always controlled by the enormous but also formative force of his *mind*. And it is not by chance that from his young years Franko the poet preaches incessantly the “powerful mind”... and it seems, that it is hard to find in the world poetry a person so inspired, almost an “eulogist”, by the mind-intellect, reason-ratio, in a purely Cartesian sense.” (Malanyuk 1995, p. 70).

⁶⁸ Franko 1986c, p. 187.

⁶⁹ Franko 2004, pp. 390–391.

Thus, Franko distinguishes primary data about the world, which is called facts, and the conclusion from these facts, which according to the positivist approaches is a theory. Following the methodological principles of historians-positivists, historians should deal with the worlds of these primary facts, extracted from reliable sources. Subsequently, sociologists, having analysed and summarized the facts, draw conclusions and present them as systems of concepts, abstracting them from the specific historical realities and aiming at making these facts understandable, that is expressed within the interconnected network of logical concepts, different correlation of which constitute sociological laws. Franko notes that when climbing up the steps of abstraction, findings are becoming less reliable. Stepping back from the canons of positivism clouds the understanding of the nature of facts, which already includes the conclusions from other facts – something later methodologies of science will call being “loaded” by a theory. In the above-quoted passage it is also interesting that Franko uses the central category of Spencer’s positivism, i.e. “evolutionism,” which, as we saw, is united in this case with the concept of “historian”.

Later Franko sometimes, even directly, criticized positivist approach from various methodical perspectives. For example, he disagreed with the cult of single facts and the unwillingness to build generalizations of the famous Ukrainian historian Myhailo Hrushevskyi (1866–1934):

the author puts main attention to the analysis of historical events but does not have the talent to group the historical facts. With all his deep consideration to his planning of an important historical scene, the prominent historical figures drown in the mass of details and deliberations.⁷⁰

Grouping facts is possible only with certain criteria which cannot be abstractions; this means that such a criterion, firstly, cannot be a fact, secondly, it is the basis for a certain set of facts. One also finds rejection of the positivist admiration for single historical facts in the article “Na skloni viku” (At the end of century), where Franko notes that science has “emancipated itself from the dogmas and formulas and is preoccupied with the details.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ Franko 1986g, pp. 453–454.

⁷¹ Franko 1986e, p. 295.

In this way, the analysis of Franko's connections with positivism in his philosophical reflections on the historical process and on the specificity of its epistemology shows the whole spectrum of how he used the positivist approaches: from direct imitation through creative application up to the criticism of individual elements of the positivist theory. However, we have to emphasize once more that Franko was never followed blindly the positivist dogmas, but he rather freely used positivistic achievements. It is also worth underscoring once more that positivist and materialist doctrines of history became the philosophical basis not only of Franko's views but of the whole ideology of Ukrainian populism (*narodnyctvo*).

5. Conclusions

What unites Drahomanov, Kulish and Franko in their perception of positivism, is the idea that these teachings are the voices of their epoch best suited to describe it. Also the belief that the time of the "true science" has come – the science which is to be connected to the socio-political practice and which can clarify in the only rightful way this desacralized world view and solve its immediate problems – might not have made these intellectuals blind adherents of the positivist sociological doctrine but at least meant that they accepted lots of its postulates. However, while Drahomanov and Franko considered this world of phenomena as their sole object of knowledge, Kulish postulated the need to combine positivist knowledge and religious feelings, claiming that they are complementary in the spiritual sphere of humanity. The interest in the problems of the historical dimension of the human being and the means to pin it scientifically down moved these intellectuals in their reflection over the historical process to concentrate on such elements of the positivist paradigm as biological-scientific analogies in the understanding of the nature of humans and social sciences, a compulsory introduction of the idea of law to the historical process, the priority of the mental factors in the perception of progress, the multifactorial approach in the explanation of the moving forces of history.

When the phenomenon of Ukrainian positivism was emerging, its direct sources were not the positivist centres, France and England, but the local versions of positivism in Germany, Poland and Russia. Apart from personal contacts (Stronin, Ochorowicz), it was also the translations of

Comte's, Mill's, Spencer's or Buckle's works into these three languages that made it possible for Ukrainian scholars to read positivist writings first hand. In the case of Russian one also has to be aware of the issue of double identifications, as texts written by scholars like Stronin or Le-sevych were part of both Russian and Ukrainian tradition. One should also accentuate that the scholars that mostly influenced Ukrainian positivist project in this period were John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, and not the father of positivist movement Auguste Comte.

Finally, one has to say that positivist elements can be found not only in the philosophical-historical part of the Ukrainian philosophical culture, but also in the works of Ukrainian historians, in the esthetical thought, literature, ethnography and literary studies. In fact, positivism became one of the components of the Ukrainian culture, making it unison with the main trends of European intellectual life. However, the complexity of the structure of Ukrainian culture, with the domination of the vernacular culture (*prostonarodna kultura*), and the top social strata representing commonly the Russian culture, made the conflict with the Russian imperial culture imminent.

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